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lenders for the want of security), and in the less-developed north she invested it in sheep, plough-oxen, or even horses which she hired out on the 'half-and-half' system. Before a woman died, she gave a little of her *pekul* to her daughters and the major part to her sons, but nothing to her husband, so making a last comment on the curiously detached relationship between them during their married life.

Except in the towns, no Albanian woman ever went into domestic service. Each worked as a girl in her father's house and then in her husband's and, though never paid any money, was assured for life of whatever board, lodging and clothes these could provide. This applied even to families of the standing of Cen Elezi in Dibër. Consequently the Unwritten Law took no cognizance of female servants. On the other hand, men servants—mainly farm workers or herdsmen—were numerous enough to have been carefully legislated for.

Though such a servant ate out of the same dish as his master and slept in the sitting-room or elsewhere in the same conditions as the young unmarried men of the family, he had always to take a back seat—in the literal sense near the door and far from the fire; and, in the metaphorical sense, effacing himself. This befitted both his youth and his status. For his status was like that of a woman. 'It is for the master to command and for the servant to obey', said the Unwritten Law. If he were a shepherd, his views on the beasts under his care commanded his master's respect, but other servants were required to keep their opinions to themselves. In areas such as Martanesh where women could not be killed in a blood feud, a servant was as safe as they were from his master's enemies. 'Kill a servant? Faugh! As well kill a woman', was the sentiment.

There was, however, another aspect to his position: since he came from another family in his master's village or from another village altogether, he was not a member of his master's household but was its guest. As such he was entitled to protection by his master against all hurt from third parties. If he were hit, the offender must pay twice, compensating him for the personal injury of the blow and his master for the affront to his guest. If he were robbed, his master latterly complained to the police, but in the old days would have shot the robber out of hand in the north, but in Martanesh and farther south, not until he saw that the servant himself was too weak to resent the injury as honour demanded. If

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357 a servant were killed, a modern master again told the police, but
628 nevertheless both he and the servant's family considered themselves at feud with the murderer, the former to avenge the death of his guest and the latter to avenge the death of their relative; more often than not, the master made it 'tit for tat' by killing the murderer's servant. In former times a servant was most commonly killed because he was mixed up in a blood feud of his own. In that event his master went to see his enemy and warned him that the man was now in his service and, consequently, under his protection. If his enemy disregarded the warning, his master never rested until he had avenged the servant.

Again in the old days, vengeance took a fiercer turn when the servant was from a different community. He was then counted as a stranger, and the guest of his master's tribe or village, as well as of his master himself. If he were killed by one of this community, the others rose as one man, burned down the murderer's house and destroyed all his goods. The modern Albanian government has repressed this custom, but the servant's master and family still try to shoot the murderer.

The same public vengeance used to await the murderer of a local servant who was working for a stranger to the tribe or village. But in such a case it was the injury to its stranger guest which the community wished to avenge; in itself the death of the servant was a matter for private vengeance by his family. In aggravated cases, as when the murdered servant as well as his master was a stranger, the community might order the execution of the murderer by a firing squad. This was done in 1944 in the village of Dukat, in south-west Albania.

357 No Albanian ever stooped to become a servant except from dire necessity. Most commonly he wanted to marry, and having no spare cash, must earn enough to pay for his bride. He was usually engaged on St George's or St Demetrius's day in the Old Style calendar, and so on 6 May and 8 November in ours, dates which correspond roughly to the beginning and end of the dry season. His engagement was for six months or, more often, a year. His wages and his work depended on the bargain he made with his master before being hired. In the 1930's his wages, including food only, ranged according to his quality from one napoleon (16*s.* at par) to half a napoleon a month, payable monthly. In late Turkish times, when clothes as well as food were given, the rates were from

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357 worked, and must forfeit the rest. To us the pound or two involved seems too insignificant to matter to either, but to most Albanians it was an important sum. In the event, for example, of the master's moving from one district to another, he might not dismiss the servant unless he gave him a full year's wages. If, however, he asked the servant to go with him and the servant refused, he must let him go but need give him no more than what he had so far earned. In the same spirit the law forbade the master to dismiss the servant for a frivolous reason, such as not liking him, and forbade the servant to run away for a frivolous reason, such as boredom. If the master disregarded this law, he must pay the servant a full year's wages, and if the servant disregarded it, he must be content with the wages he had earned to date. By exception, in Krasniqë, in north-east Albania, the master sought out his runaway servant, and after making him find a man to guarantee his future behaviour, brought him back to stay out his time.

[627] If the master had good grounds for dismissing the servant, he must warn and forgive him twice. If the warnings went unheeded, the master said the elders must now judge between them. The servant then went and told his story to the chief elder—the bajraktar in tribal areas—who next asked the master what he had to say. Thus in possession of both sides of the story, the elders sat on the case and pronounced judgement; this turned generally on what money was to be paid to the servant.

[466] If the servant were lazy, an all too common occurrence, or otherwise unsatisfactory, without being criminal, the Unwritten Law allowed his master to reprimand him reasonably and bade the servant swallow the reprimand. But the master must not use foul language or hit the man. For his motive might be to force him to leave before his time, apparently of his own volition, and so deprive himself of his full wages. If the master transgressed this law, the servant had leave to appeal to the elders, not only for payment of his wages in full, but also for compensation for the injury of being hit or violently abused.

357 [714] 685 The more serious crimes with which a servant might be charged included theft, murder and seducing a girl or young wife in his master's family. In the case of theft the issue depended largely on whether the servant stole from his master, in his master's village, or in another community. If he were caught red-handed robbing his master or subsequently admitted doing so, he was immediately

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500 to 50 *grosh* ('piastres') a year, payable in two instalments, the first after six months' service and the second at the end of his term.

According to a list from Shkrel where wages were still on an 'all-found' basis, a servant must be given a complete set of clothes —a shirt, drawers, cloth cap, scarf, cow-hide sandals, socks, trousers and sleeveless jacket. He got sandals as often as he needed a new pair, and a set of the other things three times a year: when first engaged, at the end of three months, and during his last month. On leaving he was given three okes of wool, which his female relatives could work up for him.

Disputes hardly ever arose over the servant's food or clothes, but were common about his work. As an Albanian of Koplik said picturesquely, 'Before a man is hired he talks like an angel, and then turns out a devil', so that 'half the men who lie in cemeteries have died of worry over servants'. The same speaker told a lively folk-tale of a master who was delighted to get a servant cheap and then found him come very dear indeed. Every time he asked him to do something, the man said it had not been mentioned in their bargain and he could not do it unless he got a rise in wages. Little attempt to get 'references' seems to have been made, perhaps because in the old days a would-be servant would have shot the giver of an adverse 'character' for slandering him. There was also a feeling that a servant's engagement was too temporary to take seriously. Once when the author inquired uneasily about a servant she had been urged to hire, an old mountaineer replied, 'What does it matter? you're not going to marry him'.

'Any gains made or any damage done by a servant are his master's', said the law. If, for instance, a servant somehow gained a horse, he could not send it to his own family, but must give it to his master. On the loss side of the ledger, if a servant unintentionally damaged a neighbour's property, say, by killing his horse, it was not he but his master who must make restitution, and his master could not keep back any of his wages for that purpose. Fining a servant was absolutely forbidden.

The relations of master and man with each other and with the outside world were regulated in detail by the Unwritten Law, using the servant's wages as its chief instrument. Thus if the two parted prematurely, the master being to blame, he must pay the servant his full wages for the year. When the servant was to blame, he had no right to more than the money for which he had so far

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dismissed with only the wages due until then. Since it was in a sense his own house and his own father that he had robbed, he could not be given a second chance; he was too obviously devoid of ordinary decency to be trusted again. And since the law forbade his master to strike him, he could not be beaten, as a thievish woman might be, till he reformed.

Dismissal did not end his story. He had to pay the statutory fine for housebreaking and to bring his late master two of everything he had stolen. If he had no money for the fine, he had to find a surety for the amount and then go and earn it elsewhere. After European legal codes were introduced at the end of the 1920's, these unwritten laws lost much of their force, and it was rather by threatening to get the thief sent to prison that an injured master obtained restitution.

In less sophisticated days a servant who was only suspected of robbing his master could be tried by the ordeal of the oath. If this proved him innocent, his master had to pay him six *qese* ('purses') for unjustly accusing him, besides a full year's wages and clothes. If it was later found that he had perjured himself, the elders fined him twenty-four *qese*, of which half went to the church (or mosque) and half to the tribe; he had also to return to his master the six *qese* and the unearned wages and clothes which he had won from him by perjury. It sometimes transpired, however, that the informant who had disclosed his perjury had lied himself. Then the elders once more declared the servant innocent, ordered the church and tribe to return his twenty-four *qese*, and the informant to pay him a year's wages and clothes besides six *qese* for the false accusation.

If a servant stole in his master's village or another community, punishment depended on who had instigated the crime. If his master had done so, he and not the servant was in fault, and it was for him to make reparation to the victim. He must also dismiss the servant forthwith as a public nuisance; but since the man was only his tool, he must pay him a full year's wages. If, on the other hand, a servant stole on his own initiative, the fault was his and it was for him alone to make restitution. In addition, he might be legally dismissed with no more than the wages he had earned.

Much the same laws applied when a servant committed a murder. If he did so at his master's instigation, both were punished. He must be dismissed, but his master must pay him a full year's wages. The resultant blood feud was primarily his concern, but if he

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357 escaped from the district, his master might lawfully be shot in his
[82] stead. When, however, a servant murdered on his own respon-
672 sibility, he alone should suffer for the crime. His master was entitled, in dismissing him, to keep back the portion of his wages for which he had not worked, and according to Lek's Kanùn ought not to be shot in his stead. Skanderbeg's law, however, held him as liable in this case as in the former.

357 The only available information about a servant's seducing a girl
684 or young wife in his master's family comes from Martanesh and Shkrel and dates from past times. In Martanesh the law con-
[608] demned the man to death for incest because his master was his 'father' and the young woman his 'sister'. In Shkrel he was killed
[836] at once if he had sinned with a young wife, but if with a girl he was dismissed with orders to hold his tongue, and only if he talked did the girl's father go and shoot him. As for the girl, she was married
[836] to her fiancé as quickly as possible. He was not told that she was pregnant by another man, and would not have cared if he had been. He wanted her as wife and worker and felt sure that he was man enough to keep her straight after marriage; beatings always worked
[848] wonders. The child was sent to the servant as soon as born; he never acknowledged it but either killed it or exposed it by the wayside. The father did not dare to beat the girl in case she ran away to the servant; at all costs he had to keep her for her fiancé, who had presumably paid a good proportion of her bride-price and would have killed him had he failed to deliver her. Presumably the fact that a servant was held to be of little or no account saved the wife or girl from the usual punishment for adultery.[1]

357 Sometimes, despite their being 'brother' and 'sister', a servant
[502] married his master's daughter. Thus an ancestor of Bicaj was a Catholic of Gjugjë in Mirditë who entered the service of Hysen Agë Shteki of Bicaj, turned Moslem, and married Hysen Agë's daughter. Even in modern times a servant may be given his master's daughter in marriage. This is particularly likely to happen if his master is Moslem and he a Christian who agrees to change his religion. His master then looks on his own consent to the marriage as an act of piety. Servants varied in importance according to the master they served. Thus the servant of a Moslem priest (*hoxhë*) had more power than an ordinary peasant's and less than a bajraktar's —at least in the days before most bajraktars were shorn of their

[1] See Chapter XXI.

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power by modern governments. The value of the difference to the servant was that the more important his master, the better he himself was protected.

It is the rule in all denominations that priests may not carry arms. This is no drawback to anybody under a modern administration, but in Turkish times it meant that a priest's servant was more exposed to danger than an armed layman's. The Catholic church tried to make up for the deficiency by special legislation of which Father Gjeçov gives a full account. Thus, though a priest's servant had a certain freedom to attend to his own business, any message he carried to a house was treated as coming from the priest. Whoever molested him molested the priest, and might be fined according to the gravity of the offence but not less than ten lambs, which went, not to the servant, but to the church and tribe. Whoever killed the servant started a feud with his family only, if the servant were local, but with the whole parish if he were a stranger—here can be recognized the principle of the community's guest—and if the murderer was local, the parish burned his house and took a hundred lambs and an ox from him as fine. If labourers hired by the church were molested, the offender had to pay a fine, divisible between them and the church; the more numerous they were, the heavier the fine; on an average this amounted to ten lambs. If an offender refused to pay, the parish went in a body and took what it wanted from his sheepfold. In short, the church treated any wrong to a defenceless priest's servant as a major crime.

The retainers of great men were essentially a bodyguard, and were only maintained by men with blood feuds. Some lived at home and joined their patron for some special, and usually brief, occasion; others lived for long periods with him, constantly ready for whatever service he might ask. They occasionally received a gold piece as reward; more often they were paid in kind—by being lent money without interest for a funeral or a wedding feast, by being given grain in bad years, by having a useful word said in the ear of the authorities to extract them from some difficulty. While his own children were small, the Hereditary Captain of Mirditë had eight young relatives living permanently with him, brief holidays at home excepted. They waited at meals or carried messages to the servants with the lofty air of medieval pages of noble blood. Until exiled during the war of 1939–45, Shevqet Vërlaci, the formidable Bey of Elbasan, was guarded night and day by relays of peasants

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five hours from Tirana, travelled on through the night, and in the early morning as the car neared Peshkopi, he got out and walked home across country. (With him were a number of attendants armed to the teeth.)

Needless to say, such a man never announced beforehand the time of his departure, if his intention to depart could not be concealed.

An obvious precaution was never to stir outside the house. When a Dibër notable went to Tirana, he took at least six armed attendants along with him, who might or might not live with him permanently. The armed attendants of the Hereditary Captain of Mirditë were mainly young relatives of his who spent years with him, at once his clansmen and his relatives; their loyalty was beyond doubt. The bodyguard of Shevqet Bey Verlaci of Elbasan were generally peasants from his farms who had been long in his service. Less rich men who needed numerous attendants on their walks abroad drew them from their neighbours. Selman Nus Cohu, for instance, an attendant of the bajraktar of Lurë, lived at home and only joined the bajraktar when he or another member of his family needed him for a journey or some other cause. When Miftar Selmani of Lumë came to Tirana he brought a posse of armed neighbours who constantly changed as their services were required at home; some came with him for the outing, others out of bounden duty to requite the help he had given them in earlier times.

Men still poorer contented themselves with reinforcing the men of the household with a single permanent retainer. Such a man was the peasant from Shëngjerg who fled to Namid Çallaku of Fulqet after committing three murders, and in return for his board and an occasional tip protected his protector. In Mat it was also customary to go and stay for a month at a time with a friend who had need of an extra gun.

Failing armed attendants, a hunted man was not without protectors on his journey. In districts where women were immune a woman's company, on a journey as at work, was sufficient. When Shalë as a tribe was in blood with its neighbour, Mertur, a man from Shalë could safely go to Mertur with a woman born in Shalë or another tribe who was married in Mertur, for she counted as belonging to Mertur and the man was therefore her guest. On the other hand, a daughter of Mertur who was married in another tribe